

This is an official

CDC Health Advisory

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National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) November 27th - December 3rd, 2006

Every year in the United States, on average 5% to 20% of the population becomes infected with influenza virus. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from influenza complications and about 36,000 people die from influenza. Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza and its severe complications. Anyone who wants to reduce their risk for getting influenza should be vaccinated during each influenza season. Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for the following groups:

- Persons at high risk for influenza-related complications and severe disease, including:
 - children aged 6--59 months
 - pregnant women
 - persons aged \geq 50 years and
 - persons of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- Persons who live with or care for persons at high risk, including:
 - household members in frequent contact with persons at high risk and who can transmit influenza to those persons at high risk, and
 - health-care workers

Although vaccination programs focus on providing vaccination before or early in the influenza season, influenza vaccination should continue throughout the fall and winter months since influenza activity can circulate anytime from November through April. In addition, many people recommended to receive influenza vaccination have not been vaccinated by November.

To help raise awareness about the importance of influenza vaccination in November and beyond, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Influenza Vaccine Summit and other partners announce a National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) to take place from Monday, November 27 through Sunday, December 3, 2006. CDC encourages state and local health departments, public health partners, and providers to plan influenza vaccination clinics and activities to promote influenza vaccination. Free materials are available for easy printing at the "flu gallery" (www.cdc.gov/flu/gallery), including posters and educational flyers.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.